

THE
HISTORY
AND
ANTIQUITIES,
OF THE
TOWN OF
ABINGDON,
BERKS.

PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1798.

(PRICE THREE-PENCE)

Berks. 8^o. 1798



THE
HISTORY
OF
ABINGDON.

IT is evident that the name of ABINGDON is derived from its once famous ABBEY, before the building whereof, it was called Sheovesham, this Monastery was of the Benedictine order, and founded by Heane, Nephew to Cissa, Father to king Ina, about the Year 676. William the Conqueror kept Easter here, and left his youngest son Henry to be educated by Robert d'Oyly, a great benefactor to this place. Many men eminent for their quality, learning and virtue, lay interred in the Church of this Abbey; but all memorials of them were destroyed, with most of the buildings, at the time of the Reformation.

The

The Town was made a free borough and corporation by charter from Q. Mary I. which was procured at the interest of Sir John Mafon, a native of it, and privy counsellor to that Queen: The government is by a Mayor, Bailiffs and Aldermen. The Mannor and Lordship were formerly the demefne of the Abbey, but are now vested in the Corporation. The Market-houfe is reckoned the fineft in England, built on very high and and grand pillasters of the corinthian order; over it is a large Guild-Hall, for the Affizes and other public bufinefs. The Market-days are Monday and Friday. There are fix Fairs yearly, namely, June 13; St. James, (Auguft 5); Sept. 13; St. Andrews, (Dec. 11); the first Monday in Lent; and the Monday after old Michaelmas-day.

In this Town are two Churches,
the

the great one, dedicated to St. Helen, is remarkable for its form of building, consisting of five parrallel Ailes, with the Steeple at the North-east corner, so that the breadth of the whole from North to South, exceeds its length from East to West.

The smaller Church is dedicated to St. Nicholas, built by one of the Abbots, on the increase of inhabitants. The West entrance under the Tower, is worthy the observation of the Antiquary.

Both these Churches contain many ancient and curious Monuments, particularly in St. Helen's a very fine modern one for Mrs Hawkins, but their inscriptions brevity obliges us to omit, in order to insert the following antique Copy of verses from a tablet hung up in the hall of Christ's Hospital, in St. Helen's Church-yard, containing

a quaint and interesting detail of the Benefactors, and building of Burford and Culham Bridges; whereby the great London Road was brought through this Town, which in some degree supplied the subsequent loss of the Abbey, by influencing travellers to take this rout from London to Gloucester, &c. instead of going, as before, by way of Wallingford and Dorchester, (in Oxfordshire) which Towns, especially the latter, are thought to have decayed in consequence.

Henrici, quinti Regis quarto revoluto
Anno Rex idem pontem fundavit utrumque,
Supra locum binum *Borford* dictum Culham-ford, &c.

Kinge *Henry* the fift, in the fift of his Raine, *fourth*
At *Burforde* and *Culham* did Bridges build twain
Betwene these two Places, but Abendon most
The Kynges high wayes now may be esely past
In M. C.C.C.C. and tenne more by fixe,
This so pious Werke did his Majestie fix,
Ye Passengers nowe who shal travaile this waye,
Besure that ye minde for the Founder to praye.

Of

Of alle Werks^y in this Worlde that ever were w^yought
 Holy Chirche is chefe, there Children been cher^yid,
 For be Bapt^yism these Barnes to Blisse been ibrought,
 Thorough the grace of God, and fayre refresh^yed.

Another blisse^yd besines^y is Brigges to make
 There, that the Pepul may not passe after greet Show^y, *Shewes*
 Dole it is to drawe a deed Body out of a lake,
 That was falled in a fount stoon, and a felow of oures.

Kinge Henry the fift^y, in his fourthe yere,
 He hath ifound^e for his folke a Bridge in Berkesch^yre,

For Cartis with Cariage may go^e and come clere,
 That many Wynters afore were mar^yed in the myre; *moreed*
 And som oute of her sad^yes flette to the grounde, *sadels (falle)*
 Went forthe in the Water wist no man whare,

Five Wekys after, or they were ifounde,
 Her Kyn and her knowle^ych caught hem uppe with care. *(acquaintance)*
 Then the Commons of Abendon cryed on the Kynge,

Upon Dukes and Lordes that were in this Londe
 The Kynge had hem begynne apon Goddes blissinge *apon*
 And make it also strong^e as they couthe with stone, lyme
 (or sonde.

Apon the day of Seynt Albon they began^y this Game,
 And John Huchyns layde the firste Stoon in the Kynge's
 Sir Peris Befillis, Knyght, curteys and keend, (name,
 For his Fadir soule, and his Fren^ydes, he dyd as he scholde
 He gaf hem stonys inowhe into the Wekys ende,
 Also Mony as they nedid, feche^y hem if they wolde.
 Then crafty men for for the Querry made Crows of yre,
 Weges, and Wayes, and mony had ~~hard~~ *howys (hoes)*
 Jeffray Barbur^y had pay hem her hyre.

Then

Then must they have Mooldes to make on the bowys. ^(arch stones)

They cōkid for Cartes, and cast for her chīsyng,

founde

They founde out the Fundement and layde in large stones

They reysid up the Archēs be Geometre in ryng. ^{Gemeote}

(lavyng)
(haling)

With xi Laborers lavyng at onys.

Ther was ~~w~~ater inowhe, stone, lyme, and gravel,

Werkemen als wise as they coude fynde any,

And ever bad the Barbour pay for her travel,

Til a M. mark be spende eche a peny.

Then the strengthe of the streame astoned hem stronge.

In labor and lavyng & moche Money was lore; ^(lost)

There loved hem a Laddē was a watermah longe,

He helpe stop the streame till the werke were afore.

It was a solacc to se in a somer seson,

C.C.C. I wys workyng at onys,

iiii. and iiii. reulyd be reson.

To wete who wrought best were set for the nonce.

The Peple preved her power with the pecoyle ^(pickaxe)

The Mattoke was man handeled right wel a whyle;

With Spades and Schovelis they made such a noyse, ^{schovelis}

That men myght here hem thens a Myle.

Wives

~~W~~ent oute to wite how they wrought, ^(know)

score

V. ~~searfe~~ in a Flok, it was a fayre sight;

In bord clothes bright, white Brede they brought,

Cheek and Cheekes clerelych a dyght. ^(prepared)

These weren the Dyches i diged in ful harde grounde,

And i cast up to arere with the wey,

Se then they were iset with a quyk mownde

To holde in the Bankes for ever and ay.

The Gode Lord of Abendon, of his Londe,

For

HISTORY OF ABINGDON.

9

For the breed of the Bridge xxiiii. fo^l large, (breadth)

It was a greet focour of Erthe and of Sonde,

yt And ~~that~~ he abated the rent of the Barge.

An C. Pownde, and xvli. was truly payed.

hendes Be the hendes of John Hurbyns and Banbery also,

For the Waye and the Barge, thus it must be sayed,

Thereto witnesse Abendon, and many oon moo.

For now is Culham Hithe, icom to an ende,

An al the contre tife better, and no man the worse;

Few Folke there were coude that way Wende,

But they waged a wed, or payed of her Purse. (left a pledge)

And if it were a Begger had breed in his bagge,

He schulde be ryght soone ibid for to goo aboute;

And of the pore penyles the hireward wold habbe, (take for the tolls)

A hood or a girdel, and let hem goo withoute.

Many moo myscleues there wereⁿ I say,

Culham Hithe hath caufid many a curse;

I blyssed be our Helpers, we have a better Waye, Waye

Without any Peny for Cart and for Horse.

Thus aworded the Kynge and the Convent,

And the Commons of Abendon, as the Abbot wolde;

Thus they were assented, and set al in oon assent,

That al the Brekynges of the Bridge, the Town bere bere (bear)

This was preved Acte also in Parlement, (schulde:

In perpetual pees to have and to holde;

This tale is itolde in noon other extent,

But for Myrthe, and in memory to yonge and olde;

Now every good Body that gothe on this Bridge,

Bid for the Barbour gentil Jeffray,

That clothed many a pore Man to bed and to ryse, ryge

And hathe holpe to Rentis to holde up this waye: waye

The

10 HISTORY OF ABINGDON.

wiche

The ~~which~~ Rentes right trewe Men have I taken on ^{honde} ~~boude~~
And graciously governed hem hereafter with ~~bouthe~~ but he ^{trewe} ~~the~~ (fonde,

It schal be knowen openly, he doth hymselfe begyle,
I councel every Creature to kepe hym from the Curse
For of this Treys wil I no more telle,
And be not to covetous to your owne Purse,
For peril of the Peyns in the Pit of Helle.
Now God geve us grace to folowe Treuthe even,
That we may have a Place in the Blysse of Heven.

Amen.

✠. A. B. I. N. D. O. N. R. F. I.

Take the first letter of youre four
Fader, with A, the werker of WEX WEX
and I, and N. the coloure of a Affe; set
them together, and tel mee yf you can,
what it is than.

Richarde Fannande, Iremonger,
hathe made this Tabul, and set it here
in the Yere of Kyng Henry the sexte Henry
XXXVI.te

This borough sends one Burges to
Parliament.

FINIS.



✓ ^{now} a good while
Who so have hem

EX

rry